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# Discerning the correlation between spellings and consonant sounds in English words

Lok Raj Sharma

## ABSTRACT

Understanding the relationship between spellings and consonant sounds is essential for developing effective pronunciation skills and language proficiency. This study aims to discern the correlation between the consonant spellings and their corresponding consonant sounds in English words. By analyzing a diverse corpus of words, this research sheds light on the patterns and irregularities that exist in English spelling conventions. The research study employed a qualitative research approach and gathered secondary data, such as spellings, words, and sounds, from relevant literature sources including books and journal articles. A large corpus of English words was collected by covering various lexical categories and encompassing different phonetic contexts. The data as consonant sounds underlying with diverse spellings in words reflect the regularities, and exceptions within the relationship between spellings and consonant sounds. The findings reveal both consistent and inconsistent correlations between spellings and corresponding consonant sounds. Certain consonant sounds display a high degree of predictability as their corresponding spellings and tend to follow specific patterns. However, the study also uncovers numerous irregularities and exceptions where the same consonant sound can be represented by different spellings or different consonant sounds can be represented by the same spelling patterns. The implications of these findings extend to language instruction, curriculum design, and literacy interventions. The research provides insights into the complexity of English spelling conventions, emphasizing the need for explicit teaching strategies and phonics-based approaches to enhance phonological awareness and spelling proficiency among learners.

**Keywords:** Consonant, English words, letter, pronunciation, spelling

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The English language is renowned for its complex spelling system, which often poses challenges for learners and native speakers alike. One crucial aspect of this complexity lies in the correlation between spellings and the corresponding consonant sounds. Understanding this relationship is fundamental for accurate pronunciation, and overall language proficiency. This study aims to discern the correlation between spellings and consonant sounds in English words, shedding light on the patterns, regularities, and exceptions that exist within the language's orthographic conventions. It is necessary for learners to understand both

regularities and irregularities in English spelling conventions (Apel and Masterson, 2001).

It is important to have metalinguistic awareness in discerning the relationship between spellings and consonant sounds, enabling learners to make informed spelling choices (Share, 1995). English spelling is known to be highly irregular, with many words exhibiting multiple ways to represent the same consonant sound or the same spelling representing different consonant sounds. This inconsistency often confounds learners, making it difficult to determine the appropriate pronunciation based solely on the written form. The complexity in the system of English spelling stems from its intricate linguistic history, incorporating numerous borrowed words from diverse languages without achieving comprehensive spelling reforms (Rao, 2018).

Moreover, inconsistencies in the relationship between spellings and consonant sounds hinder the development of phonological awareness and spelling proficiency. The irregularities in English spelling conventions have been widely discussed in previous research (Templeton and Morris, 2000; Corney, 1994). To delve into this intricate relationship, a comprehensive analysis of a diverse corpus of English words has been conducted in this study. The corpus encompasses words from various lexemic classes, including verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs, ensuring a representative sample of the English language. The selected corpus also covers different phonetic contexts, allowing for a nuanced examination of consonant sounds in various word positions.

The research methodology employed in this study embraces a linguistic analysis which involves examining spelling patterns, identifying clusters of letters representing specific consonant sounds, and investigating the contexts in which different spellings are used. The significance of explicit phonics instruction in developing accurate pronunciation and spelling skills is high (Ehri and Snowling, 2004). The pronunciation of spellings is one of the challenging tasks for English language learners. However, an explicit teaching of spelling patterns can enhance learners' ability to decode unfamiliar words and improve spelling accuracy (Johnston and Watson, 2005).

In English terms, there is not constantly corresponding association between spellings and their parallel pronunciation. The same spelling retains diverse pronunciations. The pronunciation of the spelling 's' is /s/ in 'cats', /z/ in 'falls', /ɪz/ in 'buses', and /ʃ/ in 'sure'. Likewise, diverse spellings, such as 'f', 'ff', 'ph', and 'gh' in words 'fame', 'staff', 'phone' and 'rough' are pronounced /f/. Similarly, the same vowel letters are pronounced differently in different words. English language learners often find pronunciation challenging due to the variation in spelling and sound correspondence. For instance, the spellings 'ea' can be pronounced as /e/ in 'head' and /i:/ in 'beat'.

Similarly, the pronunciation /i:/ can be represented by different spellings like 'ea', 'ee', 'ie', and 'ei' in words such as 'heat', 'sheep', 'field', and 'receive' respectively. This complexity in pronunciation poses a significant difficulty for many second or foreign language students of English. The implications of discerning the correlation between spellings and consonant sounds extend to various domains, including language instruction, curriculum design, and literacy interventions. Educators can utilize the findings of this study to develop targeted instructional strategies that emphasize explicit teaching of phonics and phonological awareness.

Phonological awareness is closely linked to spelling proficiency and the ability to discern the relationship between spellings and consonant sounds (Goswami and Bryant, 1990). Individual differences, such as cognitive abilities and language backgrounds, can influence the acquisition and application of spelling and phonetic knowledge. Phonological processing skills are crucial for discerning the correlation between spellings and consonant sounds in English words (Seymour et al., 2003).

Such approaches can enhance learners' ability to decode unfamiliar words, improve spelling accuracy, and foster overall language proficiency. Understanding the correlation between spellings and consonant sounds is crucial for effective literacy development (Adams, 1990). The findings of this study have the potential to inform language instruction practices, curriculum development, and interventions aimed at enhancing pronunciation skills and language acquisition processes.

### Theoretical review of literature

The correlation between spellings and consonant sounds in English words has been a topic of interest and investigation among researchers in the fields of linguistics, education, and psycholinguistics. This literature review aims to provide an overview of existing research and theoretical perspectives related to this complex relationship. This study contributes to the understanding of the intricate relationship between spellings and consonant sounds in English. By discerning patterns and irregularities, it offers valuable insights for educators, linguists, and language learners, ultimately aiming to improve the pronunciation skills.

### Spellings

A spelling is a process of forming words from individual letters, and a letter is a written or printed sign representing a sound in speech (Hornby, 2010) according to the principles of underlying accepted usage. Spelling refers to the process or act of writing or pronouncing the letters in a specific word (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2003). It is taken as a linguistic process that involves

representing the sounds of a language through written symbols in a systematic manner, known as phonemic orthography (Hornby, 2000). The English spelling system has largely diverged from its corresponding pronunciation, providing little guidance on how words ought to be pronounced (Follick, 1964).

While this system has its flaws, it is not as confusing as it is frequently portrayed (Crystal, 2003). Adopting an explanatory perspective can facilitate the process of learning spelling, making it more manageable. While it is crucial for children to grasp spelling-sound correspondences, it is equally essential for them to develop the ability to identify words whose pronunciations deviate from those patterns (Backman et al., 1984). In English words, a spelling may have a phoneme as /s/ in the word 'sit', two spellings may have one phoneme as /s/ in the word 'boss' and three spellings may have a phoneme as /tʃ/ in the word 'butcher'. In a nutshell, letters are the individual characters, while spellings are the specific combinations of letters used to form words accurately.

### *Pronunciation*

Pronunciation is a way a person speaks the words of a language. English pronunciation is very tough for foreign students and the reason for this distinction is that spelling and pronunciation are separate aspects (Reid, 2016). The significant role of speech production in the English language lies in its capacity to facilitate communication and interaction through the use of words, with each word consisting of letters that correspond to specific sounds.

Each speaker has their own mode in uttering words in their normal speech (Boyer and Boyer, 2001). Pronunciation can be likened to melodic tones that arise when speech flows seamlessly, and any disruptions in rhythm can lead to misunderstandings. It is commonly believed that pronunciation abilities are connected to musical aptitude (Gilakjani, 2011).

### *Consonant Sounds in English*

Human beings are supreme creatures because of language use for different purposes. Language is one of the benefits we can use for describing our concrete objects as well as abstract ideas. The ability to use language for expressing ideas, opinions and emotions, information, past experiences, future plans, and imaginations is a distinguishing characteristic that sets humans apart from other beings in the universe. It is one of the key aspects that make us uniquely human. Language, as a primarily human and non-instinctive form of communication, involves the deliberate use of symbols to convey ideas, emotions, and desires (Sapir, 1921). It is social and we are constantly tangled in the procedure of social interaction (Nicholas, 1982).

Language enables and facilitates social interaction among individuals. It is a bridge that connects people in the family and the society. Language works in a context. Each language possesses its unique grammar and sound system, with English comprising twenty-four consonants and twenty vowel sounds. According to Crystal, (2003), consonants are produced through vocal tract closures or constrictions that either completely obstruct the airflow or generate audible friction due to restricted airflow. Consonant sounds in speech are generated when airflow encounters obstruction within the vocal tract. This obstruction occurs at the point of contact between an active articulator (such as the lower lip or different parts of the tongue) and a passive articulator (such as teeth, alveolar ridge, hard palate, or soft palate).

The active articulator moves towards another articulator, creating a closure or constriction in the vocal tract. These sounds are referred to as speech sounds since they are produced by the organs of speech. Speech, which is a manifestation of language, is typically a continuous stream of sound. According to Gimson, (1990), consonants are distinctively formed through deliberate interference of the vocal organs with the airflow, making them easier to identify and comprehend. Verma and Krishnaswamy, (1999) share a similar perspective, defining consonants as sounds characterized by constriction, accompanied by certain degree of friction or stricture followed by release.

There are 21 consonant letters in English language. The set of consonant letters in the English alphabet consists of both capital and small letters. The capital letters include B, C, D, F, G, H, J, K, L, M, N, P, Q, R, S, T, V, W, X, Y, and Z. The corresponding small letters are b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, y, and z. Consonant sounds are speech sounds of a language. English language in general retains 24 consonant sounds which are /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /m/, /n/, /ŋ/, /f/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /h/, /r/, /j/, /w/ and /l/.

## 2. METHOD AND MATERIALS

A diverse corpus of English words was used for analysis. The corpus included words from various lexical categories (nouns, verbs, and adjectives, adverbs) to ensure the representation of the sample of the English language. The analysis involved identifying

spelling patterns, clusters of letters representing specific consonant sounds, and exploring the contexts in which different spellings are used. Linguistic resources, such as dictionaries, phonetic guides, and linguistic databases were utilized to aid in the analysis.

Data were presented in tables as visual representations can effectively illustrate patterns, regularities, and exceptions in the correlation between spellings and consonant sounds, enhancing the understanding and interpretation of the results. The analysis was based on a selected corpus, which may not capture the entirety of English words. Additionally, the study focuses specifically on the correlation between spellings and consonant sounds. The chosen materials and methods facilitated a comprehensive analysis of the relationship, contributing to a better understanding of English spelling conventions and their implications for better pronunciation.

### 3. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF SPELLINGS AND THEIR CORRESPONDING CONSONANT SOUNDS

The article writer has attempted to show the relationship between the spellings and their sounds in different words used in English language.

**Table 1** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'b/ bb'

Spellings	Sound	Words
B/bb	/b/	Ban, rabbit, sob, soybeans, hobby, abbot, rabbi, cabbage

#### Analysis

The spellings 'b' or 'bb' are pronounced /b/ that is a voiced bilabial plosive consonant.

**Table 2** Consonant sounds of the spelling 'c'

Spellings	Sounds	Words
C	/s/	Centre, city, policy, cite, cinema, cell, palace, place
	/k/	Cat, cot, cut, count, camel, cucumber, counter, cushion, music
	/ʃ/	Cello, cellist

#### Analysis

The spellings 'c' is pronounced /s/ that is a voiceless alveolar fricative consonant, /k/ that is a voiceless velar plosive consonant, and /ʃ/ that is a voiceless palato-alveolar fricative consonant.

**Table 3** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'cc'

Spellings	Sounds	Words
Cc	/k/	Soccer, tobacco, occur
	/ks/	Accent, accident, success, succinct

#### Analysis

The spellings 'cc' are pronounced /k/ that is a voiceless velar fricative consonant, and /ks/ that are the combination of a voiceless velar plosive consonant and a voiceless alveolar fricative consonant.

**Table 4** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'ch'

Spellings	Sounds	Words
Ch	/k/	Chemistry, chorus, choir, stomach, monarch, chaos, chimera,
	/tʃ/	Child, chalk, chide, beach, peach, reach, chief
	/ʃ/	Chef, machine, chemise, cheroot, chic, chignon, chivalry, chalet, charade, chevron, chiffon, chute

**Analysis**

The spellings 'ch' are pronounced /k/ that is a voiceless velar plosive consonant, /tʃ/ that is a voiceless palato-alveolar affricate, and /ʃ/ that is a voiceless palato-alveolar fricative consonant.

**Table 5** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'ck'

Spellings	Sound	Words
Ck	/k/	Back, lack, luck, duck, black, bucket, rocket

**Analysis**

The spellings 'ck' are pronounced /k/ that is a voiceless velar plosive consonant.

**Table 6** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'd/dd'

Spellings	Sound	Words
D/dd	/d/	Dog, god, bladder, lad, huddle, read, red, dead, fade

**Analysis**

The spellings 'd' or 'dd' are pronounced /d/ that is a voiced alveolar plosive consonant.

**Table 7** Consonant sounds of the spellings (digraph) 'dg'

Spellings	Sound	Words
Dg	/ dʒ /	Badge, edge, judge, ledger, nudge, hedge, lodge

**Analysis**

The spellings 'dg' is pronounced / dʒ / that are a voiced palato-alveolar affricate consonant.

**Table 8** Consonant sounds of the spelling 'f'

Spellings	Sounds	Words
F	/f/	Five, fifth, leaf, staff, friend, life
	/v/	Of

**Analysis**

The spellings 'f' is pronounced /f/ that is a voiceless labio-dental fricative consonant, and /v/ that is a voiced labio-dental fricative consonant.

**Table 9** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'ff'

Spellings	Sound	Words
Ff	/f/	Off, staff, stiff, buffalo, riff, buff, muffle, muff

**Analysis**

The spellings 'ff' is pronounced /f/ that is a voiceless labio-dental fricative consonant.

**Table 10** Consonant sounds of the spelling 'g'

Spellings	Sounds	Words
G	/ dʒ /	Gentle, gene, geology, gym, gem
	/g/	Get, goat, guide, god, game
	/ ʒ /	Genre, garage, beige, rogue

**Analysis**

The spellings 'g' is pronounced / dʒ / that is a voiced palato-alveolar affricate consonant, /g/ that is a voiced velar plosive consonant, and / ʒ / that is a voiced palato-alveolar fricative consonant.

**Table 11** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'gg'

Spellings	Sounds	Words
Gg	/ g /	Bigger, beggar, struggle, aggressive, sluggish, shaggy
	/ dʒ /	Suggest,

**Analysis**

The spellings 'g' is pronounced / g / that is a voiced velar plosive consonant, and / dʒ / that is a voiced palato-alveolar affricate consonant.

**Table 12** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'gh'

Spellings	Sounds	Words
Gh	/f/	Enough, rough, tough
	/g/	Ghee, ghost, ghetto, ghoul, ghastly

**Analysis**

The spellings 'gh' are pronounced /f/ that is a voiceless labio-dental fricative consonant, and /g/ that is a voiced velar plosive consonant.

**Table 13** Consonant sounds of the spelling 'h'

Spellings	Sound	Words
H	/h/	Hand, hen, hide, behind, happen, hope, perhaps

**Analysis**

The spelling 'h' is pronounced /h/ that is a voiceless glottal fricative consonant.

**Table 14** Consonant sounds of the spelling 'j'

Spellings	Sound	Words
J	/dʒ /	Join, jam, joker, enjoy, jump, jolly

**Analysis**

The spellings 'j' is pronounced /dʒ / that are a voiced palato-alveolar affricate consonant.

**Table 15** Consonant sounds of the spelling 'k'

Spellings	Sound	Words
K	/k/	Kite, looks, hook, kind, like

**Analysis**

The spelling 'k' is pronounced /k/ that is a voiceless velar plosive consonant.

**Table 16** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'l/l'

Spellings	Sound	Words
L/l	/l/	Love, looks, ball, fell, like, feel, fill, lamp, fall

**Analysis**

The spellings 'l' or 'll' are pronounced /l/ that is a voiced alveolar lateral consonant.

**Table 17** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'm/mm'

Spellings	Sound	Words
M/mm	/m/	Mind, must, camel, sum, summer, mammal, master

**Analysis**

The spellings 'm' or 'mm' are pronounced /m/ that is a voiced bilabial nasal consonant.

**Table 18** Consonant sounds of the spelling 'n'

Spellings	Sounds	Words
N	/n/	Name, now, mind, land, man, pen
	/ŋ /	Tank, monkey, bank, sank, bring

**Analysis**

The spellings 'n' is pronounced /n/ that is a voiced alveolar nasal consonant, and /ŋ / that is a voiced velar nasal consonant.

**Table 19** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'ng'

Spellings	Sound	Words
Ng	/ŋ /	King, spring, sing, string

**Analysis**

The spellings 'ng' is pronounced /ŋ / that is a voiced velar nasal consonant.

**Table 20** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'nn'

Spellings	Sound	Words
Nn	/n /	Manner, sunny, funny, scanner, banner

**Analysis**

The spellings 'nn' are pronounced /n / that are a voiced alveolar nasal consonant.

**Table 21** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'p/pp'

Spellings	Sound	Words
P/pp	/p/	Pun, cup, speak, happen, appear, apple, sleep, puppy

**Analysis**

The spellings 'p' or 'pp' are pronounced /p/ that is a voiceless bilabial plosive consonant.

**Table 22** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'ph'

Spellings	Sound	Words
Ph	/f/	Phone, phoneme, phenomena

**Analysis**

The spellings 'ph' are pronounced /f/ that is a voiceless labio-dental fricative consonant

**Table 23** Consonant sounds of the spelling 'q'

Spellings	Sound	Words
Q	/k/	Queen, quite, quote, quit, question

**Analysis**

The spelling 'q' is pronounced /k/ that is a voiceless velar plosive consonant.

**Table 24** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'rr'

Spellings	Sound	Words
R/rr	/r/	Read, spring, carry, worry, ride, great, sorry, hurry

### Analysis

The spelling 'r' or 'rr' is pronounced /r/ that is a voiced post-alveolar frictionless continuant.

**Table 25** Consonant sounds of the spelling 's'

Spellings	Sounds	Words
S	/s/	Sit, sister sin, bus, cats, same, faster
	/z/	Fans, balls, kings, music, verbs,
	/ʃ/	Sure, surety, sugar, sugary, surely
	/ʒ/	Measure, division, revision, erasure, eraser

### Analysis

The spellings 's' is pronounced /s/ that is a voiceless alveolar fricative consonant, /z/ that is a voiced alveolar fricative consonant, /ʃ/ that is a voiceless palato-alveolar fricative consonant, and /ʒ/ that is a voiced palato-alveolar fricative consonant.

**Table 26** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'sc'

Spellings	Sounds	Words
Sc	/s/	Scene, science, scent, scenic
	/sk/	Scatter, scare, score, scrape, scout, scorn, scope

### Analysis

The spellings 'sc' are pronounced /s/ that is a voiceless alveolar fricative consonant and /sk/ that are the combination of a voiceless alveolar fricative consonant and a voiceless velar plosive consonant.

**Table 27** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'sch'

Spellings	Sounds	Words
Sch	/ʃ/	Schedule, schwa, schmo
	/sk/	Schema, scheme, scholar, school
	/s/	Schism

### Analysis

The spellings 'sch' are pronounced /ʃ/ that is a voiceless palato-alveolar fricative consonant, /sk/ that are the combination of a voiceless alveolar fricative consonant and a voiceless velar plosive consonant, and /s/ that is a voiceless alveolar fricative consonant.

**Table 28** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'sh'

Spellings	Sound	Words
Sh	/ʃ/	Ship, worship, wash, bush, push, sheep, shine, shoes

### Analysis

The spellings 'sh' are pronounced /ʃ/ that is a voiceless palato-alveolar fricative consonant

**Table 29** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'ss'

Spellings	Sound	Words
Ss	/s/	Pass, miss, bless, bliss, piss, kiss

### Analysis

The spellings 'ss' are pronounced /s/ that is a voiceless alveolar fricative consonant

**Table 30** Consonant sounds of the spellings 't/tt'

Spellings	Sound	Words
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T/tt	/t/	Tide, cat, obtain, cattle, battle, bottle, cotton, hotter
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### Analysis

The spellings 't' or 'tt' are pronounced /t/ that is a voiceless alveolar plosive consonant.

**Table 31** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'tch'

Spellings	Sound	Words
Tch	/tʃ/	Catch, match, batch, hatch

### Analysis

The spellings 'tch' are pronounced /tʃ/ that is a voiceless palato-alveolar affricate consonant.

**Table 32** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'th'

Spellings	Sounds	Words
Th	/t/	Thomas, Thames, Thailand, Thai, thyme
	/θ/	Thin, think, thermal, thing, thank
	/ð/	There, their, them, then, than, thou

### Analysis

The spelling 'th' are pronounced /t/ that is a voiceless alveolar plosive consonant, /θ/ that is a voiceless dental fricative, and /ð/ that is a voiced dental fricative.

**Table 33** Consonant sounds of the spelling 'v'

Spellings	Sound	Words
V	/v/	Van, vein, convex, love, leave, vote, value

### Analysis

The spelling 'v' is pronounced /v/ that is a voiced labio-dental fricative consonant.

**Table 34** Consonant sounds of the spelling 'w'

Spellings	Sound	Words
W	/w/	War, work, worry, worship, wine, win, window

### Analysis

The spelling 'w' is pronounced /w/ that is a voiced bilabial semi-vowel.

**Table 35** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'wh'

Spellings	Sounds	Words
Wh	/w/ (Wh+a/e/i/ u)	Whack, whale, what, wheat, wheel, when, where, white, why, whump, whup
	/h/ (Wh+ o)	Who, whole, whom, whose, where

### Analysis

The spellings 'wh' are pronounced /w/ that is a voiced bilabial semi-vowel and /h/ that is a voiceless glottal fricative consonant.

**Table 36** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'wr'

Spellings	Sound	Words
Wr	/r/	Write, wring, wrote, wry, wrong, wrought

### Analysis

The spellings 'wr' is pronounced /r/ that is a voiced post-alveolar frictionless continuant.

**Table 37** Consonant sounds of the spelling 'x'

Spellings	Sounds	Words
X	/ks/	Ox, fox, box, annex, suffix, x-ray
	/z/	Xylophone, xenophobia, zero
	/ʃ/	Xiamen, Xian
	/s/	Xu

**Analysis**

The spelling 'x' is pronounced /ks/ that are the combination of a voiceless velar plosive consonant, and a voiceless alveolar fricative consonant, /z/ that is a voiced alveolar fricative consonant, and /ʃ/ that is a voiceless palato-alveolar fricative consonant, and /s/ that is a voiceless alveolar fricative consonant.

**Table 38** Consonant sounds of the spelling 'y'

Spellings	Sound	Words
Y	/j/	Yak, yearn, yes, yam, yoke, yolk, yield

**Analysis**

The spelling 'y' is pronounced /j/ that is a voiced palatal semi-vowel.

**Table 39** Consonant sounds of the spellings 'z/zz'

Spellings	Sound	Words
Z/zz	/z/	Zebra, zinc, topaz, buzz, puzzle, zoo, breeze, dizzy, zone
	/ts/	Pizza, pizzeria, pizzicato

**Analysis**

The spellings 'z' or 'zz' are pronounced /z/ that is a voiced alveolar fricative consonant, and /ts/ that are the combination of a voiceless alveolar plosive consonant, and a voiceless alveolar fricative consonant. The aforementioned examples illustrate a correlation between the spelling and pronunciation of certain words, but it should be noted that this correlation is not universally consistent across all words. English language employs two types of words: words with pronouncing all the spellings in it as in the words 'pet', 'land' etc. and the words with some silent letters as in 'know', 'comb' etc. The table given below demonstrates some words in which the spellings are silent or they remain unpronounced.

**Table 40** Silent letters in words

Silent Letters	Words
B	Doubt, Thumb, Comb, Dumb, Bomb, Climb, Lamb, Tomb, Numb, Plumber, Crumb, Subtle, Debt, Limb, Aplomb, Womb, Jamb, Coulomb, Succumb
C	Scent, Scissors, Scene, Scenario, Fascinate, Ascend, Descend, Science, Resuscitate, Conscious, Obscene, Crescent, Evanesce, Conscience, Muscle, Abscess, Abscond, Ascent, Disciple, Fluorescent
D	Edge, Sandwich, Wednesday, Handkerchief, Handsome, Badge, Wedge, Hedge
G	Align, Assign, Benign, Campaign, Champagne, Cologne, Consign, Design, Feign, Foreign, Gnarl, Gnarly, Gnat, Gnaw, Gnome, Reign, Resign, Sign...
H	Tech, Ghost, Stomach, When, Whether, Honest, Character, School, Archaeology, Anchor, Monarchy, Echo, Chaos, Heir, White, Hour, Choreograph, Scheme, What, Wheat, Rhythm, Chrome, Where, Why, Chemical, Archaeology, Chord, Handkerchief, Choir, Charisma, Mechanic, Wednesday, While, Which, Orchestra, Anchor, Psychic, Chaos, Chlorine
K	Knack, Knickers, Knew, Knead, Kneel, Kneel, Knee, Knife, Knitting, Knob, Knock, Knot, Know, Knowledge, Knuckle, Knight
L	Calf, Chalk, Palm, Yolk, Almond, Balm, Walk, Half, Calm, Folk, Could, Should, Talk, Would,

	Salmon
N	Autumn, Column, Damn, Hymn...
P	Psychiatrist, Pneumonia, Raspberry, Cupboard, Receipt, Pseudo, Psychotic, Psychology, Coup, Psychotherapy, Psychic
S	Aisle, Island, Patios...
T	Soften, Wrestle, Match, Scratch, Often, Christmas, Castle, Mortgage, Watch, Thistle, Glisten, Listen, Bristle, Witch, Fasten, Nestle, Bustle, Rustle, Butcher, Apostle
W	Answer, Awry, Playwright, Sword, Two, Whole, Wrack, Wrap, Wrapper, Wrath, Wreath, Wreck, Wreckage, Wren, Wrench, Wrestling, Wretched, Wriggle, Wring, Wrinkle, Wrist, Wrong, Wrote...

Table 40 shows that the native speakers of English do not pronounce all the letters in some words. The persons who learn English as their second or foreign language face the difficulty in discerning which letters are silent or remain unpronounced while speaking to other persons. Kenworthy, (1987) emphasizes the crucial role of the teacher, asserting that their primary function is to develop students' ability to accurately articulate and pronounce words, while also helping them progress in their second language proficiency.

In regards to pronunciation instruction, Richards and Renandya, (2002) highlight the importance of integrating it with other language skills such as reading, listening, and speaking, rather than teaching it in isolation. Additionally, Gilakjani, (2011) affirms that teaching second language pronunciation, particularly in English, presents a significant challenge. This is largely due to the intricate and intricate relationship between spelling and pronunciation in the English language.

#### Realization of consonant sounds with different spellings

The article writer has used the following table to show that a phoneme or sound can be realized with different spellings or letters in English words.

**Table 41** Consonant Sounds in the Words

S. No.	Sound	Spellings	Initial Position	Medial Position	Final Position
1	/ P /	P, pp	Pun, Pat	Apple, Caps, Apes	Cap, Lap, Up, Help, Hip
2	/ b /	B, bb	Bat, Mat, But	Robber, Robs, Rubs	Rob, Tube, Rub, Rib,
3	/ t /	T, tt, th, ed	Tone, Thomas	Cattle, Bats, Cats,	Hut, Hoped, Hit
4	/ d /	D, dd	Do, Did, Deer	Lads, Bladder,	Mad, Sad, Glad, Bad
5	/ k /	K, c, ck, ch, q, cc,	Kid, Car, Chorus, Quit	Looks, Locks, Soccer	Bake, Luck, Music, Monarch
6	/ g /	G, gg, gh	Go, Got, Ghost	Legs, Baggage	Leg, Log, Big
7	/ tʃ /	Ch, tch, tu,	Child, Chalk, Chop, Cellist	Benches, Butcher, Nature	Teach, Match, Bitch
8	/ dʒ /	J, dge, g, ge, di, de	Jam, Jug, Gin, Gentle	Ages, Soldier, Grandeur	Page, Large, Merge
9	/ m /	M, mm	Men, Meet, Me	Common, Comes, Dams	Rum, Some, Come
10	/ n /	N, nn, gn	Now, Net, Gnat	Land, Manner	Man, Ban, Bean
11	/ ŋ /	N, ng	.....	Rank, Bank, Kings	Sing, Bring, Ring, King, Thing, Spring
12	/ f /	F, ff, ph, gh	Fan, Fat, Phone,	Suffer, Lift, Shift	Leaf, Staff, Off, Rough,
13	/ v /	V, f	Vex, Vote	Leaves, Lives	Live, Love, Of
14	/ θ /	Th	Thin, Thanks	Months, Method	Path, Cloth, Bath, Faith
15	/ ð /	Th, the	This, That, Their	Mother, Father	Clothe, Bathe, Writhe
16	/ s /	S, ss, sc, c	Son, Sun, Scene, Centre	Last, Bosses	Bus, Glass, Race
17	/ z /	Z, zz, s, x	Zero, Zebra, Xylophone	Puzzling, Nuzzle	Buzz, Balls, Topaz

18	/ʃ/	Sh, s, ssio, tio, tia, ch	Shy, Sure, Chef	Worship, Mission, Nation, Initial, Motion	Wash, Push, Brush
19	/ʒ/	Sio, sure, g	Jabot, Genre,	Revision, Erasure	Garage, Beige, Rouge
20	/h/	H, wh	Home, Hide, How, Whom	Behind, Behave	.....
21	/r/	R, rr, wr	Rate, Write, Red	Spring, Carry, Marry, Worry	'R' Gets Pronounced In The Connected Speech If Gets Followed By Vowel Sounds As In 'Car Arrived'.
22	/j/	Y, u, ew, ue	Yolk, Yes, Yak	Muse, Value, Few, New	.....
23	/w/	W, wh, qu	When, Was, What	Swim, Quit, Queen	.....
24	/l/	L, ll	Live, Love	Girls, Balls, Pulse, Falls	Mall, Hall, Real

Table 41 displays that a consonant sound can be produced even with different spellings. Moreover, it shows the occurrences of consonant sound in different positions of the words. The initial position of words does not include the consonant sound /ŋ/, while the final position of words in isolation typically does not include the consonant sounds /h/, /r/, /j/, and /w/. We can perceive changes in pronunciation in the course of time. Pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary undergo constant subtle changes in all languages (Hockett, 1958). Mutability is one of the dynamic features of English language.

#### 4. EXPECTED RESULTS

The article writer believes that this article will offer students and teachers a fundamental understanding of spelling pronunciation, silent letters, and the placement of specific consonant sounds in words, thereby facilitating the teaching of spelling pronunciation to some degree. Teachers and students are encouraged to pay attention to the pronunciation of each spelling in words when referring to the English Dictionary. Developing an understanding of pronunciation will enhance their communication skills and contribute to their overall personality growth.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

The research study provides evidence that the connection between spelling and consonant sounds is not always straightforward and predictable. It reveals instances where multiple spellings can represent the same consonant sound, leading to variations and inconsistencies. This raises challenges to the notion of a one-to-one correspondence between spelling and consonant pronunciation. The findings emphasize the importance of considering phonetics and phonology in language analysis to comprehend the complexities of spelling-consonant relationships.

The study ultimately calls for a more subtle apprehension of the intricate dynamics between spelling and consonant sounds. It contributes to the existing body of knowledge regarding the correlation between spellings and consonant sounds in English words. It highlights the complexities and challenges inherent in the English orthographic system while offering insights that can inform educational practices, curriculum development, and interventions aimed at enhancing language proficiency and literacy skills among learners. Further research in this area is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between spellings and consonant sounds and its implications for better pronunciation and language attainment skills.

#### Informed consent

Not applicable.

#### Ethical approval

Not applicable.

**Conflicts of interests**

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interests.

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**Data and materials availability**

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